

WILDCAT CREEK

Increasing Regional Focus

The state's air and water are not restricted to or contained within political boundaries. They ebb and flow over wider areas. For this reason, IDEM has looked at environmental quality issues from a broader, more regional focus through the following actions:

- Creating new regional offices
- Focusing on the Wildcat Creek watershed
- Developing ozone steering committees

Regional Offices

Recognizing the benefits from IDEM's Northwest Regional Office, the agency established

two new regional offices in 1998. The Southwest Regional Office in Evansville serves 13 counties, and the Northern Regional Office in South Bend serves 10 counties. The regional offices have increased our responsiveness to these areas of the state and provide a presence in the regions where it is most needed.

Wildcat Creek Watershed

The Wildcat Creek watershed, spanning seven counties and including more than 803 square miles of varied terrain and 682 miles of waterways, was chosen to test our regional approach to water quality assessment. In 1999, IDEM's staff completed a comprehensive water quality assessment of the watershed and drafted Indiana's first compre-

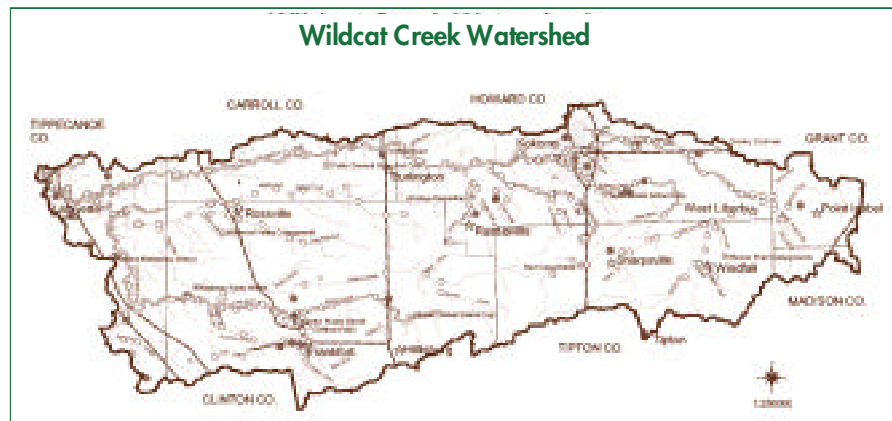
hensive watershed restoration plan for the Wildcat Creek watershed.

IDEM staff members also facilitated the gathering of local officials, citizens, environmentalists and business people to discuss the Wildcat Creek watershed and its varied pollution sources and to plan measures to improve water quality.

Ozone Steering Committees

Because air pollution travels with the wind, IDEM pursued a regional approach to help seven metropolitan areas where smog levels are high in the summer-time improve air quality and protect public health.

Committees of citizens, businesses, environmentalists and others from the areas around Fort Wayne, Terre Haute, South Bend, Elkhart, Central Indiana, Northwest Indiana, Southwest Indiana, and Clark and Floyd counties have been meeting for more than a year to learn about smog and what they can do to improve air quality and meet federal standards.



Regional Service Areas

